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SUPERVISING

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B.C. Farm Employers' Handbook

Book Three Supervising

The B.C. Farm Employers' Handbook is a series of five booklets designed to assist farm managers to effectively manage their human resources.

The books in the series and a brief outline of their contents are as follows:

Book One: Personnel Planning and Regulations
- Deciding to Become an Employer
- The Personnel Planning Process
- Complying with Regulations
- Keeping Records

Book Two: Hiring
- Objectives
- Job Description
- Recruitment
- Interviewing
- Testing
- Checking References
- Making the Selection
- Offering the Job/Advising Unsuccessful Candidates
- Employment Agreement
- Orientation

Book Three: Supervising
- *Leadership*
- *Supervision*
- *Delegation*
- *Personal Style*
- *Special Supervisory Situations*

Book Four: Motivating, Evaluating and Training
- Managing for Peak Performance
- Performance Evaluation
- Wages, Incentives, Benefits
- Training

Book Five: Communications, Problem Solving & Discipline
- Communications
- Dealing with Conflict
- Disciplining
- Dismissal and Termination

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The responsibility for the publication as written and all conclusions reached therein is the author's alone. The publication does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the federal and provincial governments which funded the publication.

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Introduction

Employees are available to fill most employment situations. Recruitment is the key to finding them. ***Good employee-employer relations is the key to keeping them.***

The B.C. Farm Employers' Handbook is written as a guide to farm managers. The book will assist you to recruit better employees; to supervise, motivate and train your employees to achieve maximum performance; and to discipline and fire them should that be required.

Sound human resource management can result in increased productivity, reduced staff turnover, motivated employees and satisfied managers. Use this Handbook to help you achieve these ends.

The Handbook is divided into five books. We don't expect you to read each from cover to cover. Instead, familiarize yourself with the contents, place the books where they can be easily found and refer to them when you have need for specific information.

This is the third book in the series. The first book looks at the personnel planning process and offers a guide in deciding how many and what type of employees are required. That book also advises on the regulations about which an employer needs to be aware.

The second book discusses how to hire an employee and describes the 10 steps in the hiring process, starting with defining the job that needs to be done and ending with hiring and orientating the employee.

This book discusses supervision, one of the key elements in a good employee-employer relationship.

Leadership

Leadership is considered the foundation of good labour relations. Although you may not think of yourself as a leader, as a manager you do have a leadership role.

A study of successful business managers found that effective leadership is based on the following:

- clearly defined goals
- communicating and listening
- credibility and experience
- honesty and sincerity resulting in trust

In their book entitled The Leadership Challenge, J.M. Kouzes and B.Z. Posner say that essential leadership activities include:

a) searching for new opportunities and new ways of doing activities

b) experimenting and taking risks

c) sharing goals with others; communicating and enlisting their support

d) strengthening others and fostering a spirit of collaboration

e) setting an example and planning small wins

f) recognizing contributions and celebrating accomplishments

Leadership Power

What makes a leader? It is the ability to develop and maintain a following. Usually one person will follow the lead of another because the leader has some power or influence.

Management theory suggests that there are five different types of power:

● referent ● expert ● legitimate ● reward ● coercive

Rank yourself from 1 to 5, with 1 being high ability and 5 being no ability, on your ability to use each of the power types.

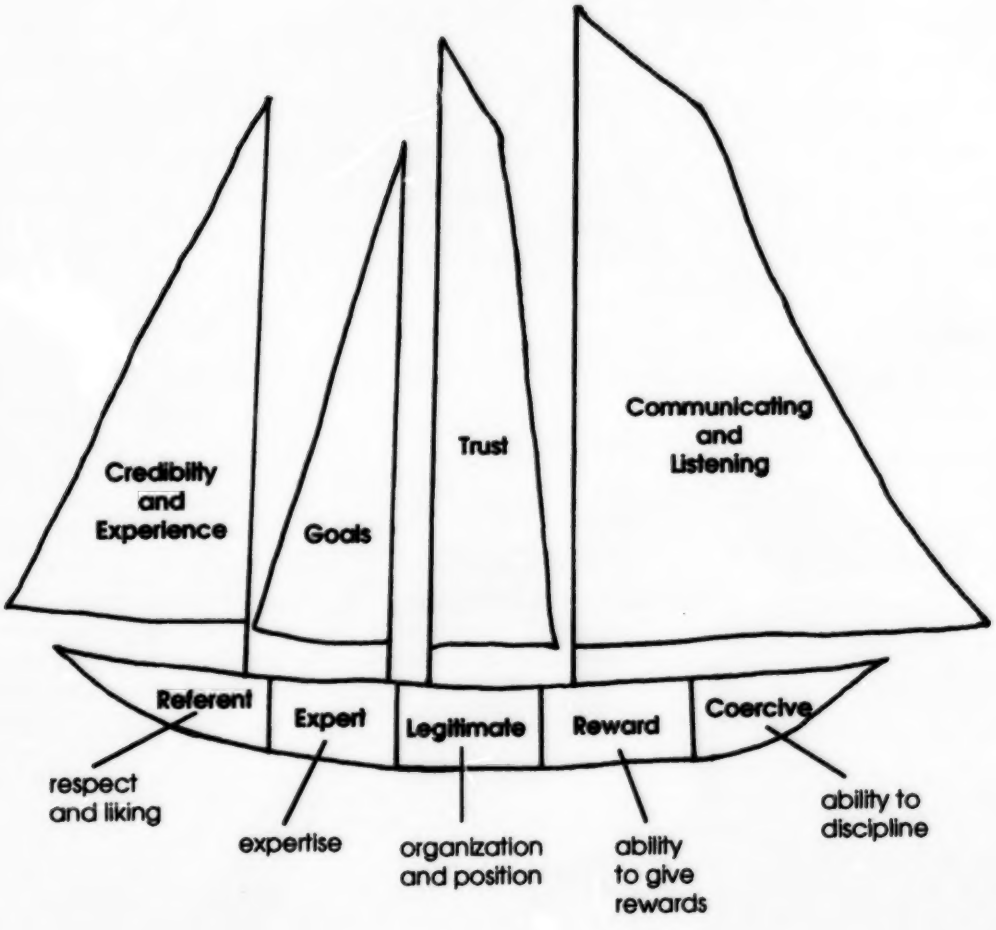
Type	Description	Ranking
Referent	The leader evokes *positive feelings* from employees. How well are you liked?	1 2 3 4 5
Expert	The leader understands complex tasks. How familiar are you with technicalities.	1 2 3 4 5
Legitimate	The leader has a position title (supervisor). How much respect is given your position?	1 2 3 4 5
Reward	The leader can provide pay raises, promotions, training, recognition, etc. How readily do you respond to good performances?	1 2 3 4 5
Coercive	The leader can enforce threats such as firing or demotion. How often do you resort to disciplinary action?	1 2 3 4 5

Supervisors who are liked, all other things being equal, have greater influence than those who are not.

An effective leader makes some use of all five types of power, with special emphasis on referent and expert power.

One way to envision your role as a leader is to compare it to a ship. Imagine the hull is made up of the types of leadership power you have. Think of the sails as being those items we first listed as being the basis for effective leadership: goals, communicating and listening, credibility and experience, trust.

The Leader Ship



Leadership Styles

Which of the following quotes sounds most like you?

> *"I tell 'em what to do, how to do it, and when. There's no other way. Someone has to call the shots on this ranch."*
>
> *"It is usually a mistake for me to finalize production commitments before checking with the crew members. After all, they know what's happening out there."*
>
> *"I put most problems into my foremen's hands and let them take it from there. My role is to make sure they know what needs to be done and then get out of the way."*

Each of these statements represents a different style of farm management.

There are many ways to categorize leadership styles. Research has shown that managers have a tendency to use the same leadership behaviours or process regardless of the people they are trying to influence or the context of the specific instance. One's natural leadership style may be more or less effective depending on the people and the situation.

Your effectiveness as a leader is dependent on the style of leadership you choose to use. It is important to recognize that no one style is best, rather a mix of styles determined by the people involved (both leader and followers) and the situation is best.

One method of categorizing leadership styles distinguishes them according to the extent to which a leader involves the followers. As you read the following descriptions, think about which style seems to be most natural for you to use. The four types are:

- **directive/telling** - "do it or else". Managers with this style tend to expect immediate compliance with their directions and solicit very little or no input.
- **authoritative/selling** -"firm but fair". Managers who use this style tend to manage by providing clear instructions, solicit some input (without leaving any doubt as to who the boss is), monitor behaviour, motivate by both discipline and reward and see influence as a key part of the manager's job.

- **democratic/participating** -"let's all participate and vote". Managers with this style are known for encouraging participation and human resource development. They tend to believe that individuals and groups function best when allowed to work together and therefore tend to feel close supervision or detailed instructions are not necessary.
- **empowering/delegating** – "colleague, partner, delegator". Managers with this as their preferred style see themselves as developing human resources and are concerned about high performance and standards. They allow people the flexibility to set goals and determine how to address their tasks and problems.

Depending on the people and situation, each of these styles has advantages and disadvantages. While you probably feel more comfortable using your natural style, having the flexibility to change your style to suit the circumstances could greatly enhance your effectiveness as a leader.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Styles

Directive/Telling

Advantages:
- short term efficiency - fast
- clear line of authority - people know who is in charge and what the desired action is
- can be very productive, especially for the short term

Disadvantages:
- people don't like it
- inhibits growth and development
- may lead to high turnover
- loss of potential good ideas

Appropriate:
- when new tasks involved
- with new or inexperienced employee
- when goals are not being met

- if urgency involved
- if employee is reluctant to take on task
- if task is highly result-oriented

Authoritative/Selling

Advantages:
- efficient and timely
- clear who is in charge
- way of exercising power without intimidation
- develops immature people
- decisions are in the best interest of the organization

Disadvantages:
- not conducive to the growth of mature individuals
- some mature people may not like it or may resent it
- could lead to turnover as people mature

Appropriate:
- as employee gains experience and competence
- when employee has some understanding of job
- when employee needs direction and encouragement

Democratic/Participatory

Advantages:
- involves people
- opportunities for growth
- keeps people happy (short run)

Disadvantages:
- time consuming
- losers may sabotage organizational goals
- majority decisions aren't always in the best interests of the organization
- change becomes a source of conflict and may be avoided

Appropriate:

- when employee is familiar with task
- when employee has high level of competence
- when employee/employer share ideas and decisions

Empowering/Delegating:

Advantages:

- encourages growth and development in mature individuals
- long-term productivity
- mature people respond well
- works well if you have committed followers
- encourages maximum creative effort
- frees management discretionary time

Disadvantages:

- doesn't work well with unwilling, unable followers
- followers may not follow
- problems may arise with strong individuals abusing power

Appropriate:

- when employee has ability to take responsibility for making and implementing decisions
- when employee has interest and desire to make and implement decisions

Adapting Your Leadership Style

No one leadership style is best. The most effective style depends on the people involved and the situation.

The following is an abbreviated questionnaire about leadership styles.

Appropriate styles of managerial leadership
adapted from Paul Hershey and Kenneth Blanshard; "Lead" 1981

Directions: Assume you are involved in each of the following situations. Read each item carefully and think about which alternative you think would most closely describe your behavior in the situation presented. Circle only one choice.

1. You have formed a work group on your farm to improve productivity and quality. This group is far overdue in making requested recommendations for change. Attendance at group sessions has been poor. Their meetings have turned into social gatherings. Potentially they have the talent necessary to help.

   A. Redefine goals and supervise carefully.

   B. Incorporate group recommendations, but see that the objectives are met.

   C. Allow group involvement in setting goals, but don't push.

   D. Let the group work out its own problems.

2. The observable performance of your group is increasing. You have been making sure that all members are aware of their responsibilities and expected standards of performance.

   A. Emphasize the importance of deadlines and tasks.

   B. Engage in friendly interaction, but continue to make sure that all members are aware of their responsibilities and expected standards of performance.

   C. Do what you can to make the group feel important and involved.

   D. Take no definite action.

3. You are considering changing to a structure that will be new to your group. Members of the farm work team have made suggestions about needed change. The group has been productive and demonstrated flexibility in its operations.

   A. Define the change and supervise carefully.

   B. Be willing to make changes as recommended, but maintain control of implementation.

   C. Participate with the group in developing the change but allow members to organize the implementation.

   D. Avoid confrontation; leave things alone.

4. Recent information indicates some internal difficulties among the farm workers. The group has a remarkable record of accomplishment. Members have effectively maintained long-range goals. They have worked in harmony for the past year. All are qualified for the task.

   A. Act quickly and firmly to correct and redirect.

   B. Try out your solution with workers and examine the need for new practices.

   C. Participate in problem discussion while providing support for workers.

   D. Allow group members to work it out themselves.

Discussion:

In each of these situations , the A response describes a directive style response; B describes how a person using the authoritative style might react; C describes democratic responses and D an empowering or delegating response. Did you find you circled more of one letter than the others? If so, this may be your natural leadership style.

However, because the most effective style depends on the people involved and the particular situation, being able to adapt your style is important.

In the first situation described, you are dealing with people who are reluctant to take on tasks and who are not meeting their goals. A directive or telling approach would therefore be most effective. A would be the best answer.

In situation number 2, your employees are gaining experience and competence. You have been giving them directions and feedback. In this instance, B would be the best choice.

In situation 3, you are dealing with employees who are productive and competent. They have communicated their ideas to you. Here, a democratic or participatory style is called for. C is the best choice.

In the last situation described, a group of employees who have proved to be competent and able to meet agreed-upon objectives has encountered some difficulties. Because you know they are trusted employees, it would be best to use empowering or delegating style. Leave them to work it out themselves (answer D).

Being able to be flexible in your choice of leadership style is an important ability for a manager to have. Realize, however, that learning to adapt your style to the situation is a gradual process.

Supervision

Supervision involves getting things done through others. To the person who has been traditionally involved in the operational end of the farm, adjusting to the role of supervisor can be difficult. Yet managers can do their farm a great disservice by over-involving themselves in operational work.

How ready are you to be a supervisor? A self appraisal quiz.

Place a check mark in the column that most nearly matches your feelings about each statement. After completing this activity, check you answers using the scoring procedure described.

	Agree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
1. I like to set my own goals and do things my own way.	_____	_____	_____
2. I have a keen sensitivity to the interests of other people.	_____	_____	_____
3. I see my work as a means only to an end, rather than as a main focus for my life.	_____	_____	_____
4. When I know a job needs to be done well, I will do it myself.	_____	_____	_____
5. I don't want to take the responsibility for someone else's work, good or bad	_____	_____	_____
6. I consider myself an attentive listener: I don't interrupt.	_____	_____	_____
7. Given a fair chance, most people want to do a good job.	_____	_____	_____
8. I live according to the rule of better late than never.	_____	_____	_____
9. When working with a group of other people on a project, I often find myself prodding them to get the job done.	_____	_____	_____
10. I have a lot to learn about management and supervision.	_____	_____	_____
11. Good employees work safely, obey the rules, and are willing to give a fair day's work.	_____	_____	_____
12. My friends know that I won't criticize them when they come to me with their hard-luck stories.	_____	_____	_____
13. People who break rules should be prepared to pay the penalty.	_____	_____	_____

	Agree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree
14. I like to show other people how to do things.	_____	_____	_____
15. The thought of working overtime without extra pay seems extremely unfair.	_____	_____	_____
16. Most of my bosses have been a hindrance rather than a help to me and my co-workers.	_____	_____	_____
17. I consider myself to be a good explainer: I can make things clear to other people.	_____	_____	_____
18. In handling my personal affairs, I rarely fall behind in what I set out to do.	_____	_____	_____
19. When assessing a situation, I find that there is likely to be some good in it as well as the bad and the ugly.	_____	_____	_____
20. When things go wrong, that's a sign that a problem needs to be solved rather than a person blamed.	_____	_____	_____

Scoring: Give yourself 1 point for each of the following statements that you *agreed* with: 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 20. Give yourself 1 point for each of the following statements that you *disagreed* with: 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 15, 16. There are no points for statements with which you neither agreed nor disagreed.

Interpretation: If you scored between 15 and 20 points, you are well equipped to supervise. If you score between 9 and 14 points, you should try to gain a fuller understanding of what supervision entails. If you scored less than 9 points, you should seriously consider whether you should supervise others.

Managerial Functions

Managers perform five major functions:

- **Planning** - deciding on business philosophy, goals and strategies - determining what to aim for and why
- **Organizing** - deals with how to achieve the goals; it entails dividing work for assignment into structure units (e.g. ranches, departments, crews and jobs) and establishing means of co-ordination among them
- **Staffing** - getting, developing, retaining people able and willing to perform the jobs as organized
- **Leading** - influencing and directing the behaviour of those people, usually through interpersonal communications
- **Controlling** - assessing actual results against objectives - seeing what was done compared to what had been planned - and taking corrective action where required.

Here's a tongue-in-cheek way of describing these management functions:

> *As nearly everyone knows, a manager has practically nothing to do except to decide what is to be done; to tell somebody to do it; to listen to reasons why it should not be done, why it should be done by someone else, or why it should be done in a different way; to follow-up to see if the thing has been done; to discover that it has not; to inquire why; to listen to excuses from the person who should have done it; to follow-up again to see if the thing has been done, only to discover that it has been done incorrectly; to point out how it should have been done; to conclude that as long as it has been done, it may as well be left where it is; to wonder if it is not time to get rid of a person who cannot do a thing right; to reflect that he or she probably has a family, and that certainly any successor would be just as bad, and maybe worse; to consider how much simpler and better the thing would have been done if one had done it oneself in the first place; to reflect sadly that one could have done it right in 20 minutes, and, as things turned out, one had to spend two days to find out why it had taken three weeks for somebody to do it wrong.*

While the solution to the above process may seem to be to do the work yourself, this is not the answer. The solution is to be an effective supervisor so that the job gets done as you would want.

Supervisory Skills

Who makes a good supervisor? A good supervisor:

- can lead - adapts to getting a job done with others
- can organize - keeps a daily schedule
- can motivate - a positive-type coach
- has initiative - makes own decisions
- is assertive - gets started on own

How do you think you rate as a supervisor? Rate yourself on each of the following points. These are qualities that employees list as being important in their supervisors.

How Do You Rate as a Supervisor?

	Yes	No
Are you on top of your job? Do you command respect for your experience?	❒	❒
Do you have the ability to "put on your worker's shoes" in discussing problems that come up?	❒	❒
Are you fair? Do you avoid playing favorites? Do you keep on an even keel?	❒	❒
Do you have great patience?	❒	❒
Do you have a sincere interest in learners?	❒	❒
Are you firm, but supportive?	❒	❒
Are you considerate, especially of the worker's job?	❒	❒

The more "yes" answers you could honestly give to the above questions, the better the job of supervising you're likely to do.

A supervisor gets results through people. Good people relations is the key.

Key functions of a supervisor

Function 1: Deputize: give the worker a job to do

Function 2: Supervise: develop his or her ability to do the job

Function 3: Energize: provide an environment in which the worker will want to do the job and do it well.

Function 4: Counselling, corrective action , dismissal

Using this deputize/supervise/energize model should encourage each employee's positive feelings about working for you. If people do not feel satisfied with their work situation, they cannot perform effectively.

Foundations for Good Relations

- Let workers know how they are getting along
  - figure out what you expect of them
  - point out ways to improve
- Give credit when due
  - look for extra or unusual performance
  - give the credit right at the time
- Tell people in advance about changes that will affect them
  - tell them why if possible
  - get them to accept the change
- Make the best of each person's ability
  - look for ability not now being used
  - never stand in a person's way

Definition of a diplomat: A diplomat is a person who can tell you "to go to hell" in such a way that you are looking forward to the trip.

Good supervision is getting people to do what you want done, when it should be done and how you want it done because they want to do it.

Delegation

A key part of your role as a personnel manager is to delegate successfully. Delegating means passing responsibilities to others. Whether the person handles that responsibility well or not depends in large measure on how you delegate the job.

Most people respond positively to being given responsibility if they are confident they can handle the job. Most of us enjoy the feeling of power that comes from being in charge of some aspect of a job. When an employee enjoys the work and responds positively to responsibility, the quantity and quality of work are enhanced.

Making Style Fit the Situation

Paul Hershey and Kenneth Blanchard of the Center for Leadership Studies have developed a "Situational Leadership" model that illustrates how to effectively lead an employee or follower to a position of authority. The model is simple and straightforward. However, if any of the four steps are skipped or passed through too quickly, problems will arise.

Step 1 - Telling

When you first begin to work employees into a new area of responsibility, you must tell them what to do. You are very much involved in the job yourself and your relationship with the employee is one of primarily teacher-student and involves considerable one-way communication.

Step 2 - Selling

As the employee or follower advances in competence and confidence, you begin to involve him or her in decisions; to "buy into" the responsibility. Now your relationship with the employee is becoming one of sharing in decisions.

Step 3 - Participating

As you progress through this stage, the employee shoulders the majority of the responsibility and you are shifting from selling the person on taking responsibility to participating as needed.

Step 4 - Delegating

The employee (follower) now has the knowledge and the confidence to take on the responsibility completely.

Tips on Delegating

- Assign responsibility and authority
- Give clear instructions
- Invite questions and discussion
- Provide feedback

You are there to give support when needed and to evaluate performance. You have turned over the authority to the follower and, therefore, are freed to carry out other management tasks.

These four steps closely parallel the four leadership styles we discussed earlier: directive (telling); authoritative (selling); democratic (participating); and empowering (delegating).

Examples of Delegating Authority

Example 1: From Picker to Orchard Supervisor

Marie has been picking apples on your farm for five years. You feel she is a natural leader and it is obvious she has the respect of the other workers. You feel you must relieve yourself of supervising in the orchard if you are to effectively manage this farm.

Step 1 Telling

You inform Marie of your decision to promote her to orchard supervisor. She is pleased and scared at the same time. You tell her you will work with her until she feels comfortable in her new role. You then give her some tasks such as discussing with pickers about what we might do to make their jobs easier, and you offer training tips where it appears to be needed.

Step 2 Selling

You talk with Marie about decisions you are making, how and why you handled a particular problem in a particular way. Encourage her to make suggestions and ask questions.

Step 3 Participating

She supervises in the morning and you supervise in the afternoon or you in one orchard and she in another. Then compare notes, including feedback from the workers.

Step 4 Delegating

You turn the job over to her, support her if she asks for it, and check with her regularly at coffee breaks or when an opportunity presents itself. At the end of the season, review her performance with her.

Example 2: From Milker to Herdsman

Your herdsman just left to start farming on his own. You decide to promote Joe, one of the milkers who has been with you for some time, to herdsman.

Step 1 Telling

You inform Joe of your decision. He is pleased but worried that he may not be able to handle the job. You assure him and let him know you will help him as long as he needs you. You then train him to do one of the tasks (such as keeping the breeding records) and monitor his progress.

Step 2 Selling

You discuss with Joe how and why you make certain decisions. He may be concerned about supervising older milkers, but you assure him of your support and how he might approach such a problem (he may see fewer problems when you point out how much of supervision is supporting and affirming those supervised).

Step 3 Participating

You and Joe share the various herdsman tasks and decisions with considerable two-way communication.

Step 4 Delegating

Joe takes full responsibility. You are available if and when he needs your support. You review his performance with him and discuss relevant issues at staff meetings. You are relieved of herdsman responsibilities.

Personal Style

Realize 75% of the people you relate to are very different from you. They use time differently, make decisions differently, prefer to relate in different ways, and have different styles of communicating.

Understanding personal styles is also an important management skill because personality directly influences working relationships.

Better results can be realized when both managers and employees are aware of how reactions of others may differ depending on their personal styles.

Here are some examples:

- A "bottom line" person often finds it frustrating to work with someone who spends a lot of time explaining details and alternatives before giving instructions. Conversely, someone who likes details can find it difficult to work with a person who sums up everything in a single sentence.
- Individuals who like to consider a number of alternatives before acting may find it annoying to work with people who just start a job as quickly as possible, and then figure out things as they go. On the other hand, an individual who likes to start right in on a job may find a lot of planning very trying.

Managers who can tune into these differences and modify their approach will get better results from their staff.

Analyzing Your Own Style

A number of different methods have been developed to explore differences in personal style. The Consulting Resource Group International, Inc. Personal Style Indicator is one such method. (See Reference section for address and phone number if you wish to order the Indicator.)

Which of the following profiles best describes how you react to situations?

Behavioral Style Action	Cognitive Style Analysis
You are goal oriented, disciplined, independent, decisive, and efficient. You favor "bottom-line" thinking and push for results and accomplishments.	You are task-oriented, thorough, logical, precise, serious, and systematic. You prefer working with facts in a methodical and careful manner.
Affective Style **Expression**	**Interpersonal Style** **Harmony**
You are people-oriented, cooperative, friendly, supportive, patient, and loyal. You like to be liked and are motivated to work with others in a joint effort. You try to influence others through creative use of speaking, writing, dancing, art or music.	You are idea-oriented, outgoing, enthusiastic, cooperative, and persuasive. You like to initiate relationships and motivate others towards goals.

Adapting Your Style

Knowing your personal style is an important start. Reacting in a way compatible only with your own style will not necessarily lead to an effective management style. To be truly effective, you need also to determine what kind of style each person you work with reacts to best.

As you classify yourself and others, remember that people's personal styles are often a mix of the types described and that the same person may react in a different way in different situations. It is not possible nor desirable to pigeonhole people. The best we can get is an indication of our preferred personal style and that of others.

Self-knowledge + flexibility = change

Think of the people you work with and try classifying them under the style that best describes them. Then think about what might be the most effective way to interact with them, using the chart on the next page.

Behavioral Styles *Action*	Cognitive Styles *Analysis*
Want others to: Give them summarized facts Respect their judgements Support them to reach goals Cope with unwanted details Cooperate with them **Get most upset when others:** Are too slow Get in their way Talk too much Try to be in control Waste time **Respond best to:** Direct, honest confrontations Logical, rational arguments Fair, open competition An impersonal approach Getting results quickly	**Want others to:** Give them detailed information Ask for their opinions Not interrupt their work Treat them with respect Do quality work the first time **Get most upset when others:** Move ahead too quickly Don't give them enough time Are vague in their communications Don't appreciate their efforts Are too personal or emotional **Respond best to:** Diplomatic, factual, challenges Arguments based on known facts Freedom from competitive strain Friendliness, not personal contact Doing tasks well and completely
Affective Styles ***Expression***	**Interpersonal Styles** ***Harmony***
Want others to: Give them opportunity to speak Admire their achievements Be influenced in some ways Take care of details for them Value their opinions **Get most upset when others:** Are too task oriented Confine them to one place Are not interested in them Compete for and win attention Seem judgemental of them **Respond best to:** Being challenged in a kind way An influencing, sales approach Enjoyable competition Affection and personal contact Having a good time	**Want others to:** Make them feel they belong Appreciate them for their efforts Be kind, considerate, thoughtful Trust them with important tasks Value them as persons **Get most upset when others:** Get angry, blow up, or are mean Demand that they be too mobile Take advantage of their goodness Are manipulative or unfair Are judgemental of others **Respond best to:** A gradual approach to challenging A factual, practical approach Comfortable, friendly times Respecting their boundaries Conventional, established ways

Special Supervisory Situations

The management skills discussed so far in this book - leadership, supervision, delegation and adapting to personality style - apply to all personnel but you may need to give special consideration to different situations. We discuss four special, but quite common, farm management situations.

Family Members

A farmer recently said to an extension agent,"I do not attend your labour management meetings since we operate a family farm." This sparked a lively discussion about what labour management is.

Labour management is sometimes thought to be the handling of hired employees. But this is too narrow a definition. The members of a farm family are human beings and there must be management of their labour inputs. Although family members may not be regarded as "employees" in the traditional sense of that word, their skills and capabilities should be a major consideration in the labour management process.

The combination of business and family that occurs in the family farm results in a complicated set of dynamics. Since it is seldom a simple matter of just hiring or firing when it comes to family members, it is critical to manage family labour situations carefully and effectively. There are no hard and fast rules to follow, but following many of the guidelines that are suggested for hired employees also benefits family members.

Some suggestions follow:

- Define hours to be worked, days off, sick leave, holidays etc. Clarifying what is expected helps all concerned.
- Pay fair wages for work done. Do performance reviews. Such practices can help overcome the tendency to let emotions and unreal expectations rule.Avoid playing favorites.

An example: Jill is a hard-working daughter of the Jones family. The Jones operate a purebred dairy farm. Jill sometimes feels cheated by her older brother, Jim, who is destined to manage the farm. Despite Jill's hard work and natural way with livestock, she is always aware Jim receives the praise.

- Be clear on who is the boss. Studies show that employees want to know who is in charge. On some family farms it seems that everyone assumes that they are in charge. When several "bosses" are involved in giving directions to an employee or a group of employees, the results are almost always disastrous. Labour management principles tell us that it is important that the "real" boss be identified and that he or she be responsible.
- Develop effective and open communication skills. Problems that arise need to be discussed, not ignored with the hope that they'll go away.

Temporary or Seasonal Workers

Temporary employees often require close supervision. Worker productivity is directly related to the amount of personal contact between the supervisor and worker. In training temporary employees, keep your approach fairly simple, though sufficient to do designated tasks efficiently and effectively. You will want to train them sufficiently to handle the task assigned. Over time, you may want to invest more training in those who show potential and interest in staying at this employment longer than originally planned.

For temporary employees, continually develop work plans and schedules and exercise close supervision. The directive or authoritative style of leadership may work best. These employees will tend to view this job as a means to an end: for example, to secure money to meet various personal needs or have some income until a permanent position can be found.

If temporary employees stay on longer than planned and gain skills, they may react better to other styles of leadership because they may become more committed to the objectives of the business.

The Small Farm

The workforce on many farms consists of the operator, some unpaid family members and a regular hired employee. Such a situation often breeds personnel management problems. Usually, the farm operator continues to work as hard as if there were no hired employee involved and remains a "do-er". He or she has had little experience in managing employees. The major objective is often to make sure that the employee works as hard or harder than the operator and family members.

To avoid these problems, first make sure you have a job description for the employee. (See Book 2, *Hiring*, in this Handbook series.) Also have an agreement spelling out the hours of employment. If at all possible, the employee should be given responsibility for specific tasks. In allocating these tasks, do not give the employee all of the unpleasant ones; you should show leadership by taking on some of these less desirable tasks yourself.

Living and Working in the Same Yard

In many situations, hired employees are supplied housing as a part of their employment package and often the house is located in the same yard as the farm owner. This situation can give rise to several problems which need to be managed carefully.

a) Privacy

Hired employees and their families need and have a right to privacy. Lack of privacy can lead to tension and friction which otherwise may not occur. Consider some of the following methods to create some privacy for your employees.

- place the house some distance from your own (this could be a solution if a mobile home were supplied)
- plant hedges or build fences
- respect your employee's privacy.

b) Infringing on time-off

It can be very tempting to ask for assistance that "will only take a minute" when your employee is handy, even if he or she isn't on duty. Even though employees may be willing to help out, it's important not to take advantage of their good nature. Respect time-off. Don't force your employee to leave the farm in order to get any free time.

Acknowledge any extra emergency help in some tangible way i.e. bonus, extra pay, time off, etc. Don't just say thanks.

c) Repairs and maintenance

Make it very clear who is responsible for repairs and maintenance required in the employee's house. If you are responsible for replacing worn-out appliances (for example), then do it promptly and willingly. Expecting your employee's family to live with non-functioning essentials such as a stove or hot water heater is bound to create resentment.

d) Kids and dogs

There are no easy solutions to offer if problems arise relating to pets or children. It may be your dog that howls all night and keeps your employees awake or it may be the other way around. It may be friction between your children and theirs could arise. These are difficult situations to handle. Being aware of them and discussing them in advance may help.

e) Family safety

The safety of children in a farm situation is a matter for the mutual discussion and input of all concerned. Everyone should be aware of a clear cut policy relating to the safety of children on the farm and be equally responsible for maintaining the rules.

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